Christianity

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Introduction

Christianity is a Semitic religion, which claims to have nearly 1.2 billion adherents all over the world. Christianity owes its name to Jesus Christ (peace be on him). The Holy Bible is the sacred scripture of the Christians:

1. The Bible is divided into two parts, the Old Testament and the New Testament. The Old Testament is the Holy Scripture of the Jews and contains records of all the prophets of the Jews that came before Jesus (pbuh).

   The New Testament contains records of the life of Jesus (pbuh).

2. The complete Bible, i.e. the Old Testament and the New Testament put together, contains 73 books. However, the Protestant Bible i.e. the King James Version, contains only 66 books as they consider 7 books of the Old Testament to be apocrypha, i.e. of doubtful authority.

   Therefore the Old Testament of the Catholics, contains 46 books and that of the Protestants, 39 books. However the New Testament of both these sects contains 27 books.

Position of Jesus in Islam

1. Islam is the only non-Christian faith, which makes it an article of faith to believe in Jesus (pbuh). No Muslim is a Muslim if he does not believe in Jesus (pbuh).
2. We believe that he was one of the mightiest Messengers of Allah (swt).
3. We believe that he was born miraculously, without any male intervention, which many modern day Christians do not believe.
4. We believe he was the Messiah translated Christ (pbuh).
5. We believe that he gave life to the dead with God's permission.
6. We believe that he healed those born blind, and the lepers with God's permission.

Concept of God in Christianity

New Testament

1. **Jesus Christ Never Claimed Divinity**

   One may ask, if both Muslims and Christians love and respect Jesus (pbuh), where exactly is the parting of ways? The major difference between Islam and Christianity is the Christians' insistence on the supposed divinity of Christ (pbuh). A study of the Christian scriptures reveals that Jesus (pbuh) never claimed divinity. In fact there is not a single unequivocal statement in the entire Bible where Jesus (pbuh) himself says, "I am God" or where he says, "worship me". In fact the Bible contains statements attributed to Jesus (pbuh) in which he preached quite the contrary. The following statements in the Bible are attributed to Jesus Christ:

   a. "My Father is greater than I." *[The Bible, John 14:28]*
   b. "My Father is greater than all." *[The Bible, John 10:29]*
   c. "…I cast out devils by the Spirit of God…." *[The Bible, Mathew 12:28]*
   d. "…I with the finger of God cast out devils…." *[The Bible, Luke 11:20]*
   e. "I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgement is just; because I seek not my own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me." *[The Bible, John 5:30]*

2. **The Mission of Jesus Christ (pbuh) – to Fulfill the Law**

   Jesus (pbuh) never claimed divinity for himself. He clearly announced the nature of his mission. Jesus (pbuh) was sent by God to confirm the previous Judaic law. This is clearly evident in the following statements attributed to Jesus (pbuh) in the Gospel of Mathew:

   "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the Prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

   "Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven; but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven."

   "For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven." [The Bible, Mathew 5:17-20]

3. **God Sent Jesus' (pbuh)**

   The Bible mentions the prophetic nature of Jesus (pbuh) mission in the following verses:

   a. "… and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me." [The Bible, John 14:24]

   b. "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou has sent." [The Bible, John 17:3]

4. **Jesus Refuted even the Remotest Suggestion of his Divinity**

   Consider the following incident mentioned in the Bible:

   "And behold, one came and said unto him, 'Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?'

   And he said unto him, 'Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one, that is, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.' "
   [The Bible, Mathew 19:16-17]

   Jesus (pbuh) did not say that to have the eternal life of paradise, man should believe in him as Almighty God or worship him as God, or believe that Jesus (pbuh) would die for his sins. On the contrary he said that the path to salvation was through keeping the commandments. It is indeed striking to note the difference between the words of Jesus Christ (pbuh) and the Christian dogma of salvation through the sacrifice of Jesus (pbuh).

5. **Jesus (pbuh) of Nazareth – a Man Approved of God**

   The following statement from the Bible supports the Islamic belief that Jesus (pbuh) was a prophet of God.

   "Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know." *[The Bible, Acts 2:22]*

6. **The First Commandment is that God is One**

   The Bible does not support the Christian belief in trinity at all. One of the scribes once asked Jesus (pbuh) as to which was the first commandment of all, to which Jesus (pbuh) merely repeated what Moses (pbuh) had said earlier:

"Shama Israelu Adonai Ila Hayno Adonai Ikhad."

This is a Hebrew quotation, which means:

"Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord." *[The Bible, Mark 12:29]*

It is striking that the basic teachings of the Church such as Trinity and vicarious atonement find no mention in the Bible. In fact, various verses of the Bible point to Jesus' (pbuh) actual mission, which was to fulfill the law revealed to Prophet Moses (pbuh). Indeed Jesus (pbuh) rejected any suggestions that attributed divinity to him, and explained his miracles as the power of the One True God.

Jesus (pbuh) thus reiterated the message of monotheism that was given by all earlier prophets of Almighty God.

NOTE: All quotations of the Bible are taken from the King James Version.

Old Testament

1. **God is One**

   The following verse from the book of Deuteronomy contains an exhortation from Moses (pbuh):

   "Shama Israelu Adonai Ila Hayno Adna Ikhad".
   It is a Hebrew quotation which means:
   "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord"
   [The Bible, Deuteronomy 6:4]

2. **Oneness of God in the Book of Isaiah**

   The following verses are from the Book of Isaiah:

   a. "I, even I, am the Lord; and beside me there is no saviour."
      [The Bible, Isaiah 43:11]

   b. "I am Lord, and there is none else, there is no God besides me."
      [The Bible, Isaiah 45:5]

   c. "I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me."
      [The Bible, Isaiah 46:9]

3. **Old Testament condemns idol worship**

   a. Old Testament condemns idol worship in the following verses:

      "Thou shalt have no other gods before me."

      "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth:"

      "Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God."
      [The Bible, Exodus 20:3-5]

   b. A similar message is repeated in the book of Deuteronomy:

      "Thou shalt have none other gods before me."

      "Thou shalt not make thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that in the earth beneath, or that is in the water beneath the earth."

"Thou shalt not bow down thyself unto them, nor serve them; for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God."
[The Bible, Deuteronomy 5:7-9]

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Prophet Muhammad in Bible (OT & NT)

> Old Testament
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Old Testament

The Qur'an mentions in Surah Al-Araf chapter 7 verse 157:

"Those who follow the Messenger, the unlettered Prophet, whom they find mentioned in their own (scriptures) in the law and the Gospel".

1. **Prophet Muhammad, prophesised in the Book of Deuteronomy:**

   Almighty God speaks to Moses in Book of Deuteronomy chapter 18 verse 18:
   "I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and I will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him."

   The Christians say that this prophecy refers to Jesus (pbuh) because Jesus (pbuh) was like Moses (pbuh). Moses (pbuh) was a Jew, as well as Jesus (pbuh) was a Jew. Moses (pbuh) was a Prophet and Jesus (pbuh) was also a Prophet.

   If these two are the only criteria for this prophecy to be fulfilled, then all the Prophets of the Bible who came after Moses (pbuh) such as Solomon, Isaiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Malachi, John the Baptist, etc. (pbut) will fulfill this prophecy since all were Jews as well as prophets.

   However, it is Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) who is like Moses (pbuh):

   - Both had a father and a mother, while Jesus (pbuh) was born miraculously without any male intervention.
     [Mathew 1:18 and Luke 1:35 and also Al-Qur'an 3:42-47]

   - Both were married and had children. Jesus (pbuh) according to the Bible did not marry nor had children.

   - Both died natural deaths. Jesus (pbuh) has been raised up alive. (4:157-158)

   Muhammad (pbuh) is from among the brethren of Moses (pbuh). Arabs are brethren of Jews. Abraham (pbuh) had two sons: Ishmail and Isaac (pbut). The Arabs are the descendants of Ishmail (pbuh) and the Jews are the descendants of Isaac (pbuh).

   Words in the mouth:

   Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) was unlettered and whatever revelations he received from Almighty God he repeated them verbatim.
   "I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him."
   [Deuteronomy 18:18]

   - Both besides being Prophets were also kings i.e. they could inflict capital punishment. Jesus (pbuh) said, "My kingdom is not of this world." (John 18:36).

- Both were accepted as Prophets by their people in their lifetime but Jesus (pbuh) was rejected by his
  people. John chapter 1 verse 11 states, "He came unto his own, but his own received him not."

- Both brought new laws and new regulations for their people. Jesus (pbuh) according to the Bible did not bring any new laws. (Mathew 5:17-18).

2. **It is Mentioned in the book of Deuteronomy chapter 18:19**

   "And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not harken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him."

3. **Muhammad (pbuh) is prophesised in the book of Isaiah:**

   It is mentioned in the book of Isaiah chapter 29 verse 12:
   "And the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I am not learned."

   When Archangel Gabrail commanded Muhammad (pbuh) by saying Iqra - "Read", he replied, "I am not learned".

4. **Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) mentioned by name in the old testament:**

   Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) is mentioned by name in the Song of Solomon chapter 5 verse 16:

   "*Hikko Mamittakim we kullo Muhammadim Zehdoodeh wa Zehraee Bayna Jerusalem*."

   "His mouth is most sweet: yea, he is altogether lovely. This is my beloved, and this is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem."

   In the Hebrew language im is added for respect. Similarely im is added after the name of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) to make it Muhammadim. In English translation they have even translated the name of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) as "altogether lovely", but in the Old Testament in Hebrew, the name of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) is yet present.

New Testament

Al-Qur'an Chapter 61 Verse 6:

"And remember, Jesus, the son of Mary, said, 'O Children of Israel! I am the messenger of Allah (sent) to you, confirming the Law (which came) before me and giving glad tidings of a messenger to come after me, whose name shall be Ahmed.' But when he came to them with clear signs, they said, 'This is evident sorcery!' "

All the prophecies mentioned in the Old Testament regarding Muhammad (pbuh) besides applying to the Jews also hold good for the Christians.

1. **John chapter 14 verse 16:**
   "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever."

2. **Gospel of John chapter 15 verse 26:**
   "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me."

3. **Gospel of John chapter 16 verse 7:**
   "Nevertheless I tell you the truth; it is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you".

"Ahmed" or "Muhammad" meaning "the one who praises" or "the praised one" is almost the translation of the Greek word *Periclytos*. In the Gospel of John 14:16, 15:26, and 16:7. The word 'Comforter' is used in the English translation for the Greek word *Paracletos* which means advocate or a kind friend rather than a comforter.

Paracletos is the warped reading for *Periclytos*. Jesus (pbuh) actually prophesised Ahmed by name. Even the Greek word *Paraclete* refers to the Prophet (pbuh) who is a mercy for all creatures.

Some Christians say that the Comforter mentioned in these prophecies refers to the Holy Sprit. They fail to realise that the prophecy clearly says that only if Jesus (pbuh) departs will the Comforter come. The Bible states that the Holy Spirit was already present on earth before and during the time of Jesus (pbuh), in the womb of Elizabeth, and again when Jesus (pbuh) was being baptised, etc. Hence this prophecy refers to none other than Prophet Muhammad (pbuh).

4. **Gospel of John chapter 16 verse 12-14:**

"I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you unto all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me".

The Sprit of Truth, spoken about in this prophecy refers to none other than Prophet Muhammad (pbuh).

NOTE: All quotations of the Bible are taken from the King James Version.

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Similarities Between Christianity and Islam

"Say: O People of the Book (Torah & Gospel)! Come to an agreement between us and you: that we shall worship none but Allah, and that we shall ascribe no partner unto Him, and that none of us shall take others for lords beside Allah. And if they turn away, then say: Bear witness that we are they who have surrendered (unto Him)." [Quran, 3:64]

Similarities / Similar Teachings in the Qur'an and the Bible which Muslims follow but Christians don't.

1. **Islam**
    a. **Definition of Islam**
        i. Meaning of Islam
        > Islam is derived from the word salaam meaning peace.
        > Submission to the Will of Allah (God Almighty).
        ii. Meaning of 'Muslim' – One who submits his will to Allah.
        iii. Islam is not a new religion found by Prophet Muhammad (pbuh).
    b. **Messengers in Islam**
        i. To every nation was sent a Guide or a Messenger. (Qur'an 35:24 and 13:7)
        ii. 25 Prophets mentioned by name in the Qur'an
        iii. Islam is the only non-Christian faith that believes in Jesus (pbuh)
        iv. Stories only of some prophets mentioned in Qur'an (Qur'an 4:164 and 40:78)

v. More than 1,24,000 Messengers according to Hadith

vi. Previous Messengers were only sent for their people and nation and their complete message was meant only for a particular time period.

vii. Moses (pbuh) was only sent for the Jews.

viii. Jesus (pbuh) sent only for the Jews i.e. lost sheep of Israel.
Al-Qur'an 3:49, Mathew 10:5-6, Mathew 15:24

ix. Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) is the Last and Final Messenger for the Whole of Mankind.
Al-Qur'an 33:40, Al-Qur'an 21:107, Al-Qur'an 34:28

x. Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) prophesised in the Bible.
Al-Qur'an 7:157
Al-Qur'an 61:6
Deuteronomy 18:18
Isaiah 29:12
Song of Solomon 5:16
John 16:7
John 16:12-14

c. **Revelations of God**

i. Several Revelations sent by Allah – Al-Qur'an 13:38.
By name only four are mentioned in the Qur'an.

ii. The Qur'an is the Last and Final Revelation.

iii. All previous Revelations before Qur'an were only sent for a particular group of people and for a particular time period.

iv. The Qur'an was Revealed for the Whole of Mankind.
Al-Qur'an 14:1, 14:52, 2:185, 39:41

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2. **Pillars of Islam**

a. Tauheed (Monotheism)

i. La ilaha ilallahu, Muhammad-ur-Rasoolullah
Sahih Bukhari Vol. 1 Hadith No. 7

ii. Believe in Allah and the Last Day, and the Angels and the Book and the Messengers.
Al-Qur'an 2:177

iii. Come to common terms — Worship of one God
Al-Qur'an 3:64

iv. Concept of God
Al-Qur'an 112:1-4
Deuteronomy 6:4
Mark 12:29

v. Shirk – Biggest Sin
Al-Qur'an 4:48
Al-Qur'an 4:116
Exodus 20:2-5

Deuteronomy 5:7-9

vi. Jesus (pbuh) not God. He never claimed Divinity
Al-Qur'an 5:72
John 14:28
John 10:29
Mathew 12:28
Luke 11:20
John 5:30
Acts 2:21

vii. 99 Attributes of Almighty God
Al-Qur'an 17:110

viii. Prefer using name ‘Allah’ rather than the word ‘God’ as the word ‘God’ can be played around with.

Word 'Allah' in the Bible – Eli, Eli, Lama Sabachthani
Mark 15:34
Mathew 27:46

b. **Salah**

i. Not merely Prayers but Programming
Al-Qur'an 5:90
Al-Qur'an 2:188

ii. Prayers restrain you from shameful and unjust deeds
Al-Qur'an 29:45

iii. Salaah timings – for healthy soul five times a day
Al-Qur'an 17:78
Al-Qur'an 20:130

iv. Take off shoes before entering mosque.

- Commandment of Allah to Moses
Al-Qur'an 20:11-12
Exodus 3:5
Acts 7:33

- Can Pray with Shoes
Sunan Abu Dawood – Vol. 1, Book of Salaah, Chapter 240, Hadith No. 652-653.

- Hygienic

v. Ablution

- Al-Qur'an 5:6
Exodus 40:31-32
Acts 21:26

- Hygienic

- Mental Preparation

vi. Stand shoulder to shoulder, while praying –

Sahih Bukhari – Vol. 1, Book of Adhan Chapter 75 Hadith no. 692

Abu Dawood – Vol. 1, Book of Salaah Chapter 245 Hadith No. 666.

vii. Sujud – Prostration

- To humble your mind, humble your body
- Sujud mentioned 92 times in the Qur'an
  Al-Qur'an 3:43 and 22:77
- Prostration in the Bible
  Genesis 17:3; Numbers 20:6
  Joshua 5:14; Mathew 26:39

c. **Zakah**

i. Meaning: Purification and Growth

ii. Description: 2.5% of saving every lunar year in charity
Al-Qur'an 9:60

iii. If every human being gives Zakaah, not a single person will die of hunger.

iv. "Wealth does not circulate only amongst the wealthy and the rich"
Al-Qur'an 59:7

v. I Peter 4:8

d. **Saum (Fasting)**

i. A. Description – one lunar month i.e. during the month of Ramadaan every lunar year, Muslims fast, i.e. abstain from food and drinks from sunrise till sunset.

ii. Benefits: learn self restraint. If you can control your hunger you can control almost all your desires. It enhances spiritual awareness.
Al-Qur'an 2:183

iii. Medical Benefits:

- Increases absorption capacity of intestines
- Lowers cholestrol.

iv. Discourages smoking, alcoholism and other addictions.

v. Bible prescribes Fasting
Mathew 17:21
Mark 9:29

e. **Hajj**

i. Description – Pilgrimage atleast once in life time if you can afford it

ii. Universal Brotherhood – 2.5 million people from all over the world gather, wear two pieces of unsewn cloth, preferably white. Cannot differentiate between rich and poor.
Al-Qur'an 49:13

iii. Significance of Kaaba – Muslims don't worship it
Psalms 84:4-7

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3. **Islam is a Complete Way of Life**

These five pillars do not constitute complete Islam. Only if the pillars are strong, will the structure be strong.

a. Humans Created to Worship Allah
   i. Jinn and Man created for worship of Allah (Al-Qur'an 51:56)
   ii. Meaning of Ibadaah – root word Abd meaning 'slave'.

b. Obeying Commandments of Allah is Submitting Your Will to Allah

   i. Abstaining from alcohol
   Al-Qur'an 5:90
   Proverbs 20:1
   Ephesians 5:18

   ii. Abstaining from prohibited food
   Al-Qur'an 5:5
   Al-Qur'an 2:173, 5:3, 6:145, 16:115

   - Dead meat
     Leviticus 17:15
     Deuteronomy 14:21

   - Blood
     Genesis 9:4, Leviticus 17:14, Deuteronomy 12:16,
     I Samuel 14:33, Acts 15:29

   - Pork is prohibited
     Leviticus 11:7-8
     Deuteronomy 14:8
     Isaiah 65:2-5

   - Food on which names beside Allah have been invoked
     Acts 15:29; Revelation 2:14

   iii. Being Honest in your Business

   iv. Helping Neighbours
   Al-Qur'an 107:1-7

   v. Abstaining from Backbiting
   Al-Qur'an 104:1-3
   Al-Qur'an 49:11-12

   vi. Obeying and Respecting Parents
   Al-Qur'an 17:23, 24

   vii. Celibacy or Monasticism is prohibited in Islam
   Sahih Bukhari: Vol. 7 Book of Nikah, Chapter No. 3, Hadith No. 4

   viii. Loving, being Kind and Just to your Wife
   Al-Qur'an 4:19

   ix. Abstaining from Adultery
   Al-Qur'an 17:32

   x. Dressing Modestly

- Al-Qur'an 24:30
  Mathew 5:27-28

- Al-Qur'an 24:31

- Six Criteria for Hijab in Islam
  Deuteronomy 22:5
  Timothy 2:9 e.g. of Mary
  Corinthians 11:5-6

xi. Circumcision
Acts 7:8
John 7:22
Luke 2:21

xii. In short, every Muslim should follow all the Commandments of Allah (swt) and His Messenger Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) and abstain from the things they have prohibited.

Conclusion

1. If Christian is a person who follows the teachings of Christ (pbuh) and not one who worships Christ (pbuh). (We are more Christian than the Christians themselves).

2. Muslim is a person who submits his will to Allah.
   Jesus (pbuh) said, "not my will but thy will be done." i.e. Muslim.
   John 5:30

3. Al-Qur'an 5:82